

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of Invention I, claims 1-17 and 25-29, and Species I (Figs. 3-5), claims 1, 2, 4-11, 13-17, and 25-29 in the reply filed on 10-18-2007 is acknowledged. Per the petition decision dated 03-31-2008, the above restriction requirement has been rescinded. Claims 18-24 have been rejoined.

Drawings

2. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the welding stud having a nipple and a generally planar surface thereabout (claim 18) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

3. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will

be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. Claims 18-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

5. Claim 18 fails to recite sufficient structure of the second end of the welding stud which provides the increases resistance to current flow through the second end in the area between a perimeter and a central area of the second end.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 1-17 and 25-29 are allowed.

7. Claim 18 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

8. Claims 19-24 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

9. Regarding claim 25, it is assumed by the examiner the applicant has invoked 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph, for the phrase “means for localizing current density...”.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments regarding the previously applied prior art have been fully considered and are persuasive. The previous prior art rejections have been withdrawn.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William L. Miller whose telephone number is (571) 272-7068. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Victor Batson can be reached on (571) 272-6987. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/William L. Miller/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3677